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Automotive News

December 19, 1988

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Gas-tax hike could peril auto sales

Chrysler, Ford support increase

By Diana T. Kuryito
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

WASHINGTON — As support grows for a gas-tax boost to help solve federal budget problems, new studies reveal that the effects on the automobile industry and the highway system could be devastating.

Vehicle production would decline by 460,000 units — half cars, half trucks — annually and the industry would lose more than 120,000 jobs if the gasoline tax is increased 15 cents per gallon, warns an economic study by General Motors.

The effects of a 45-cent hike would be far more dramatic and could slash car sales by as many as 1.5 million units, the GM study said. The sales loss would be felt most severely by the three domestic car companies because foreign-car sales would go up as gas prices rise, GM said.

Similar conclusions were drawn by the Wall Street firm Smith Barney, which found that a gas tax would shift the mix of cars back to smaller, imported models.

Smith Barney economists agreed with GM's finding that a tax increase would hurt sales, but its estimates are lower than GM's worst-case scenario. Smith Barney found that each 10-cent rise in the price of gasoline reduces new-vehicle demand by at least 150,000 to 200,000 vehicles, or about 1 percent in today's market of 15.5 million cars and trucks.

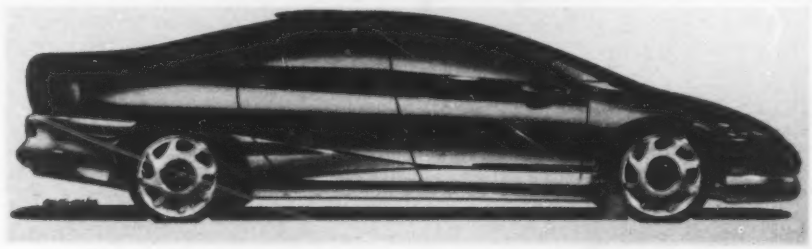
Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca has called for a gas tax increase to ease budget problems and Ford Vice Chairman Harold Poling reiterated last week that he would support such a move. But GM has been against a tax hike.

Ironically, Smith Barney said Chrysler would be hardest hit of the domestic manufacturers by a tax hike. The firm said higher fuel prices would depress truck sales faster than auto sales and Chrysler is more dependent on trucks than GM or Ford.

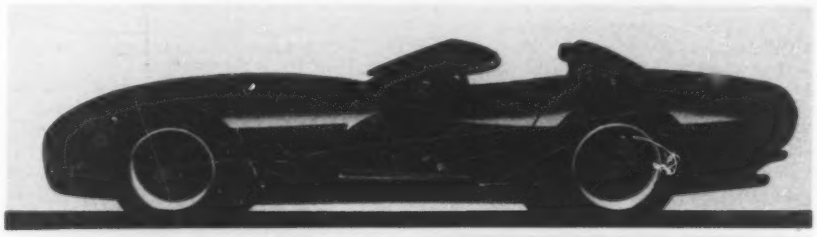
GM estimated that with a 15-cent tax hike, its car sales would drop by 240,000, Ford's would decrease 160,000 and Chrysler's 90,000, with a 10,000-unit loss split among other domestics. But foreign-car companies would gain sales of 40,000 because of the increased demand for fuel-efficient cars, GM said.

The Smith Barney study found the relationship between a decline in vehicle sales and an increase in gas taxes would be linear up to 25 cents per gallon, but beyond that point, sales would drop at faster rate than the increase in the price of fuel.

see GAS TAX, page 44



Chrysler Millennium, top, demonstrates the company's technology and design direction for the 1990s, while Dodge Viper appears to blend the classic lines of a 1960s Cobra with V-10 punch



SHOWTIME:

Chrysler's 1990s concepts to be exhibited in Detroit

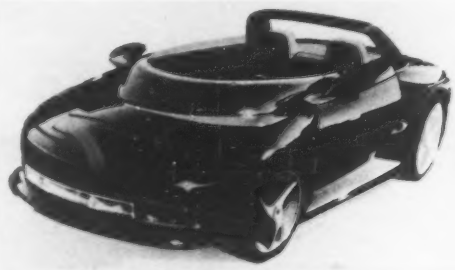
By Mary Connelly
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

HIGHLAND PARK, Mich. — Chrysler Motors will unveil five concept vehicles and a 1990 production model at next month's North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

The concept vehicles seek to emphasize the image the company is cultivating for each of its car and truck brands.

The six vehicles are:

- The Chrysler Millennium — a four-place sedan that emphasizes safety and control-related features.
- The Plymouth Speedster — a youth-oriented two-place coupe designed as a mating between high-performance motorcycles and open sports cars.
- The Dodge Viper — a rear-wheel-drive convertible conceived as a classic American drop-top with styling cues borrowed from late 1950s and early 1960s wind-in-the-face roadsters. The car is mounted with a V-10 engine.
- The Dodge Dakota Sport V-8 — a truck package based on the Dakota mid-sized pickup packed with a V-8 engine.
- Jeep concept sport-utility vehicle — a more aero-looking Jeep Cherokee, achieved with flush side glass and a windshield rake seven degrees beyond that of a production Cherokee.
- The Eagle Talon — the 1990 version of the sport coupe marketed by Plymouth as the Laser and Mitsubishi as the Eclipse.



Plymouth Speedster depicts the mating of high-performance motorcycles and open sports cars

Thomas Gale, Chrysler Motors vice president of product design, said the company will monitor reaction to the vehicles on the 1989 auto show circuit.

"I don't think we've reached far enough if the show car ends up in production," Gale said. "But elements of them will end up in production."

Of the concept vehicles, the Dodge Viper

see CHRYSLER, page 43

Lease value off; lending firms suffer

By Charles M. Thomas
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Leading banks and financial institutions are smarting from hefty losses on the residual values of hundreds of thousands of retail lease vehicles that are now coming to term.

Banks that have been heavily involved in automotive retail leases like California-based Security Pacific are scurrying to lower residual values set on retail lease vehicles as the actual resale prices of the vehicles coming off lease fall short of the residuals. This could make the leases less attractive to consumers because monthly payments will rise.

Even Ford Motor Credit concedes that its losses have been substantial on residual values of vehicles coming off lease — particularly for low-end vehicles like Escort, Lynx, Tempo and Topaz.

"We have had some heavy residual losses," said Cliff Damaska, retail lease manager — Ford Motor Credit. "We screwed up on selected car lines and set the residual values too high."

A spokesman from Chrysler Financial Corp. acknowledged the company has experienced residual losses on retail leases but declined to detail them.

Bill Nerenberg, executive director of the National Vehicle Leasing Association, said residual losses exist mainly at banks that are new to retail leasing, but the problem does spread across the entire industry.

"A lot of the banks have been looking at residual losses," he said. "They offered bargain-basement payments on unrealistically high residuals."

That pretty much characterizes what many financial institutions, particularly on the East and West Coasts, did as they hurried to write competitive retail leases beginning in the mid-1980s. To keep consumers' monthly payments low, they set high residual values.

Those leases began terminating in 1987. The vehicles are being returned to dealers rather than bought by lessees, and they are bringing far lower prices than the residual values set in the original agreements.

Best estimates by industry officials peg averages of vehicles coming off lease at 7 to 10 percent less than predicted. And some vehicles could be as much as 20 percent beneath original predictions.

The residual value problems could affect as many as

see LEASE, page 44

From cash to people

Another big job for 'GM's other Smith'

By Michelle Krebs
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

DETROIT — For seven years, during one of the most crucial periods in the history of General Motors, F. Alan Smith held one of the corporation's most important posts, that of chief financial officer.

Today, he has a different job — executive vice president, in charge of the operating and public affairs staffs groups — one that could prove to be equally as important during another crucial period for GM.

As head of the operating staffs, Smith ultimately is responsible for every GM employee, and it is the employees of GM, Smith believes, who will be the key element in GM's turnaround or lack thereof.

The operating staffs include the industrial relations department, which is responsible for hourly workers, and the personnel administration and development department, which covers salaried workers.

Smith said in an interview that

see SMITH, page 43

DWIGHT CENDROWSKI

Smith: responsible for everyone at GM

Ford develops catalyst with no platinum

By Arthur Flax
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Ford Motor Co.'s announcement last week that it has developed a catalytic converter that does not require platinum sent prices of platinum and other precious metals plummeting worldwide.

Although Ford would not disclose what it would use as a replacement, a source familiar with the project said that palladium, rhodium and cerium — all less expensive than platinum — are used.

The new catalytic converter will be used in 40,000 to 50,000 1989-

see CATALYST, page 44

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Ford speeds pursuit
of ailing thrifts
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Prechter's ASC seeks
specialty-car pact
Page 4

Ford rushes to purchase ailing thrifts

By David Versical
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Ford Motor Co. confirmed last week that it has stepped up its pursuit of some of the nation's troubled savings and loan associations in an effort to beat a year-end change in tax laws.

Ford, which is sitting on $9.3 billion in cash, has made no secret of its intent to expand its financial services business through acquisitions. But the company is now scurrying to take advantage of tax breaks that are scheduled to lose half their value by Jan. 1.

"To be frank, we are interested in acquiring the savings and loans because of the tax credits we could earn and because we think we could turn them around and make them profitable," Vice Chairman Harold Poling told reporters in Washington last week.

Ford has been an "active bidder" for troubled thrifts throughout the year, said a spokesman for the Federal Home Loan Bank Board.

So far, about 150 struggling institutions have been dealt. Ford, through its First Nationwide Bank subsidiary, has been able to pick up just one — the $1.2 billion Lincoln Federal Savings and Loan Association, Westfield, N.J.

The bank board has said that it expects another 50 to change hands by the end of the year, so there should be a flurry of activity in coming weeks.

Some of the deals could be completed in unique ways, the board has said. The troubled financial institutions have been sold as single units as well as in packages.

A year ago, Ford was pursuing one of the nation's largest thrifts, the $33.5 billion American Savings and Loan Association. The bank board broke off those negotiations, however, and the unit is now in the process of being acquired by the Robert M. Bass Group of Texas.

Any major purchases could place First Nationwide Bank closer to the top of the S&L industry. As of Sept. 30 it ranked sixth. It currently has more than $24 billion in assets.

Automotive News Staff Reporter Geoff Sundstrom in Washington contributed to this story.

New GMC Rustler model will be part of spring drive

GM's upscale pickups

Tony Lama, Stetson models spice lineup

By Joseph Bohn
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — General Motors is using designer trucks, created by some of the RV industry's best-known upfitters, to bolster its competitiveness in the pickup market.

Keith Ball, GMC Truck manager of special vehicles, calls it third-party marketing. Jeff Nihart, Bivouac Industries truck and special project manager, calls it horizontal marketing.

Regardless of the label, the difference between those customized pickups and traditional van conversions is that they don't bear the converter's name but rather that of a third, high-status company.

"We're not promoting Bivouac. We're promoting Chevys and GMCs" through special license agreements with companies like Rustler, Stetson and USA-1, Nihart said.

The specially packaged models provide upper-level trim series to GM vehicles, and give dealers and the companies multiple promotional opportunities, Nihart added.

Aviator Conversions, Wakarusa, Ind., first offered a Winchester series for GMC last year and followed up with a Tony Lama line for Chevrolet this year.

This spring, Bivouac, in Vandalia, Mich., together with Chevrolet, GMC, their dealers and the brand-name companies involved, plans a variety of promotional efforts on the new Rustler, Stetson and USA-1 models it has been producing.

Dealers, along with the truck divisions, are expected to pitch in on funding for the promotions.

The Rustler is a package for both Chevrolet and GMC full-sized pickups. The Stetson and USA-1 are variations for GMC and Chevrolet, respectively, for larger dealers who want additional variety in their orders.

The packages all have a dealer base price of $1,999.

Nihart, who designed the program, said one advantage is that it will give dealers exposure where they normally aren't represented, such as at state fairs and on the sports cable television station ESPN.

Chevrolet, for example, has been running a "Truck 'n Boot" sweepstakes for the Tony Lama trucks.

Nihart anticipates selling 5,000 of the Bivouac-created models in the 1989 model year.

Bivouac has a five-year contract with Stetson and the other signature companies. It is authorized to offer additional models next year.

GMC's Ball said other specially designed vehicles and promotional efforts, involving other converters like Choo-Choo Customs in Chattanooga, Tenn., are running in other areas of the country.

The pickup conversion market is not nearly as sophisticated as the van conversion market.

Still, it is emerging as the best new opportunity for converters, particularly those interested in joining GMC's bailment system.

At the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association's 26th annual Trade Show in Louisville, Ball said he was unlikely to approve any new van converters for GMC's consignment system. He said he already had enough to handle all the van chassis allocated to the division.

"If we add anybody to our bailment, it would be for upfitting Suburbans, S-15s or Sierras. The last five companies I added were all strictly in pickups and Suburbans," Ball said.

Dodge prepares pickup campaign

By Joseph Bohn
AUTOMOTIVE NEW STAFF REPORTER

HIGHLAND PARK, Mich. — Within three weeks, Dodge will launch a major marketing program to restore its flagging pickup sales.

Jerome York, Chrysler Motors vice president of Dodge car and truck division, also said the division:

- Will introduce a new Shadow convertible in the 1990 model year. Sourcing hasn't been determined.
- Will price the new Dakota convertible pickup truck near $14,000.
- Will introduce a new full-sized pickup line before 1994 if circumstances are propitious.
- Already has dealer orders for its full 1989-model allotment of turbodiesel engine models.
- Is interested in fielding a commercial chassis for the Class 4 market segment. York sees Class 4 trucks "growing tremendously" over the next five years.

Dodge dealers, frustrated by their declining sales of full-sized pickups in an otherwise booming market, have blamed the company's lack of aggressiveness.

Dodge's full-sized pickup sales were off 15.42 percent for the first 11 months of calendar 1988. Dodge lost 2.00 percentage points of market share in that 1.3-million-unit segment.

York said Dodge wasn't able to fully compete in the segment because of inventory shortages created by a 1988 production schedule made in the wake of the October 1987 stock market crash.

Its dealers only now have enough pickups to participate in a major new marketing drive being planned for Dodge Ram and Dakota pickups within three weeks, he added.

Chrysler will produce 52,000 full- and mid-sized pickups during the fourth quarter of this year and plans to build 54,000 in the first quarter of 1989, up sharply from 37,000 units in the first quarter of 1988.

Although York mentioned only pickups, the rumor among dealers is that Ramchargers, with rebates of up to $1,500, will also be included in the sales drive.

Meanwhile, York said pickups fit with the new Cummins turbodiesel are "sold to the walls." Chrysler built 6,000 this fall and will build another 12,000 from January through June, when production will halt for the model year.

York said that because 50 percent of the diesel models' sales are incremental, they represented at least a 9-percent increase in Chrysler's normal 100,000-unit annual big-pickup volume.

Chrysler invested about $40 million in this engine/truck project.

It is seeking an increase in the 1990 model year over the 18,000 slated for this model year.

Meanwhile, members of Dodge's dealer council, meeting with division officials recently, were highly irate at learning that they may not get a new line of full-sized pickups until 1994.

York said that Chrysler policy is to not discuss the exact timing of forward model programs. It also did not give dealers "hard information about our new-model plans beyond 2½ years" out because economic conditions could alter their timing.

He described dealer reports that the new pickups wouldn't bow until 1994 as a "worse-case scenario. The reality is sooner than that."

He added, however, that "our experience has been that you can't control all the variables. For example, we don't plan a recession, but the probabilities are that, over the next couple of years, we will likely see one."

York added that "on balance, the dealers were pretty happy with our product plans through 1992. Our objective is to keep them in the No. 3 divisional position and keep them selling a minimum of one million units a year."

He said there were "firm plans" for a 1990-model Shadow convertible, and "we think Dodge will do about 25,000 units a year."

The Dakota convertible, going into production next month, should "easily do 5,000 the first year," he said.

Although available only on the Dakota Sport model, which has "a lot of standard equipment," it will "definitely be at the low end of convertible pricing — pushing up toward $14,000," York said.

Ford Motor Co.'s success with its Class 4 Super Duty models has caught the attention of Chrysler, which would like to enter this segment within a few years.

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Mercedes and GM go to court; seek retroactive CAFE rollback

By Helen Kahn
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON — General Motors and Mercedes-Benz of North America have gone to court to find out if NHTSA is correct in saying the law does not allow it to roll back corporate average fuel economy standards retroactively.

Both companies have petitioned the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia circuit for review.

The two automakers have petitioned the agency to roll back the CAFE standard retroactively so they can avoid penalties for not meeting it.

While the arguments from all parties will be similar to those made in NHTSA proceedings more than a year old, the government is expected to use a recent Supreme Court ruling on retroactive rule-making that may apply in the CAFE case.

That decision, Bowen vs. Georgetown University Hospital, says in part that "retroactivity is not favored in the law. Thus, congressional enactments and administrative rules will not be construed to have retroactive effect unless their language requires this result. By the same principle, a statutory grant of legislative rulemaking will not, as a general matter, be understood to encompass the power to promulgate retroactive rules unless that power is conveyed by Congress in express terms."

Last year, GM asked NHTSA to roll back retroactively the 1985 CAFE standard, which Congress had set at 27.5 mpg. Mercedes-Benz asked for the retroactive rollback of both the 1985 and 1984

see CAFE, page 42

$500 rebate SHO-prises Ford execs

No, the beancounters at Ford Motor Co. haven't gone mad. You might simply chalk up their recent largess to a case of unintended incentivization.

After all, it's not every day that any automaker gives away $500 on a brand-new model. Yet some of the first owners of the Taurus SHO have been handed an unexpected rebate along with their keys to Ford's new high-performance sedan.

The SHO hardly needed a sales push. Orders have already exceeded the 10,000 mark — more than half of what Ford can build this model year. And the car has been on sale only two months.

The rebate can be traced to a program Ford intended for more sedate Taurus models beginning Nov. 9. Then the SHOs began trickling into dealerships. Its arrival apparently triggered a question: Since the SHO is a Taurus, shouldn't it qualify for the rebate too? Ford decided that because it never said the SHO wasn't covered, it had a legal obligation to include the new model in the program.

Dealers said their customers were eager to grab the $19,739 SHO without a rebate. But they haven't thumbed their noses at the checks, either.

"I think they figure it's a little bonus," said Dave Sinclair Jr., general manager at Dave Sinclair Ford in St. Louis.

Ford doesn't have to worry about losing its shirt on the deal. Sinclair and a sales manager at another large Ford dealer said they had received only a handful of SHOs so far. Ford recently cut off the SHO incentive, limiting it to cars delivered by Dec. 15.

As of last week, Ford's Atlanta assembly plant had built about 4,300 SHOs. Many of those are in the pipeline to showrooms.

— David Versical

LEGAL BRIEFS

Pa. Pontiac dealership to honor vacation trips

HARRISBURG, Pa. — An Allegheny County new-car dealership will make good on its promise of vacation packages to more than 350 consumers under a court agreement with the Pennsylvania attorney general's office of consumer protection.

The attorney general's office said the agreement requires Cochran Pontiac Inc., Monroeville, Pa., to pay $500 in costs pertaining to the investigation and to refund fees and deposits paid by consumers.

The agreement, an assurance of voluntary compliance, alleges Cochran placed advertisements promising vacations in Las Vegas, including airfare and hotel accommodations for two, for consumers who bought certain vehicles from the dealership. But when the travel promotion firm arranging the trips went out of business, consumers were unable to arrange for the vacations, said Attorney General LeRoy S. Zimmerman.

The assurance alleges Cochran's ads led consumers to believe the vacations were offered at no charge, when in fact, consumers were required to pay $130 in fees and deposits to the travel agency, Zimmerman's office said.

Although not admitting wrongdoing, Cochran will offer 353 consumers a choice of a substitute vacation package greater in retail value and character to the Las Vegas trip or $100 cash.

Cochran will refund any fees or deposits paid by consumers.

The assurance was signed for the dealership by its vice president, R.E. Cochran.

Solar heater buyers sue Chrysler First Financial

WHITTIER, Calif. — A consumer group has filed a federal class-action suit against Chrysler First Financial, a division of Chrysler Corp., alleging criminal violations of federal racketeering laws.

The suit, filed by a group called Public Interest Inc., also names several California-based solar heating companies.

The suit claims that "Chrysler jointly devised a sophisticated scheme designed to systematically defraud homeowners through a process of selling and financing domestic solar heating systems."

This case, Mercado vs. Chrysler First Financial, was filed in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles and asks damages and relief under provisions of the Racketeering Influence and Corrupt Organizations section of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970.

"If successful, this nationwide lawsuit will benefit more than 200,000 victimized homeowners in about 30 states," said Joe Morgan, Public Interest director.

"Using a systematic scheme of high-pressure sales, phony gifts, quick installations, exaggerated utility savings, bogus rebates, defective equipment, hidden finance charges, and undisclosed liens on homes, Chrysler Financial, and a host of solar companies, bilked an estimated $2 billion from American homeowners from 1983 to 1986," said Morgan.

"Many homeowners who lost more than $10,000 each to Chrysler have written Lee Iacocca asking him to make this right as he did with the old Chryslers sold as new cars. All we got was a legal response. Now we have given Chrysler our legal response," said homeowner Cesario Mercado of Oxnard, Calif.

A Chrysler Financial spokesman said he could not comment on matters of pending litigation.

Court says dealer beef can't cross state line

CINCINNATI — A federal court has ruled that a Kentucky law allowing a dealer to protest placement of a competing franchise within 10 miles of his operation does not apply when the complaining dealer is in another state.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit agreed with a lower court's position that Kentucky did not intend to protect an out-of-state dealership even though it was within 10 miles of a new Kentucky dealership.

In 1985, Peugeot Motors of America granted a franchise to The BMW Store in Cincinnati. Later, Riverside Ford, Covington, Ky., applied to East[illegible] Distributors Inc., an independent distributor of Peugeots, for a franchise that was within 10 miles of the BMW Store, but on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River.

The BMW Store then sued Peugeot Motors, Eastern Auto Distributors and Riverside Ford, seeking a preliminary injunction restraining Eastern and Riverside under a Kentucky law that allows the dealer affected by the 10-mile rule to file a protest and stay his potential competitor's operation until the Motor Vehicle Commission holds a hearing.

The district court denied the Ohio dealership's request for a stay and the federal appeals court affirmed the decision.

Dealer loses appeal over competitor's site

PITTSBURGH — Bianchi Subaru has found what a difference a day can make when appealing the placement of a competing Subaru point within its relevant marketing area.

A Pennsylvania court upheld a decision by the state's Board of Vehicle Manufacturers and Dealers that dealer Raymond Bianchi's protest was invalid since it arrived 21 days after he learned that Penn Jersey Subaru intended to open a point within his market area. State law says the protest must be filed within 20 days.

Bianci was notified of the new point by his distributor Dec. 10, 1986, and was told that no internal appeals procedure exists within the organization. Bianchi mailed his letter of protest to the state board Dec. 30 and it was not received until Dec. 31.

After the state board dismissed his protest as being untimely, Bianchi appealed, saying the 20-day provision applies only after a dealer has gone through an internal appeals process and, as a result, the law is ambiguous when such a system is not available. In that case, Bianchi argued, a reasonable period — such as 21 days — should be allowed.

Judge Alexander Barbieri said he found no ambiguity in the application of the 20-day limit and agreed with the state board that the protest was not officially filed until it was received by the board.

Bianchi said he is still conferring with his lawyers about possible further litigation.

"It would be risky suing my distributor, because, as you know, they're like God. They decide how many cars you get (to sell) and when you get them."

Penn Jersey is one of three remaining independently owned Subaru distributorships.

Ohio charges dealer deceived customers

HAMILTON, Ohio — The state attorney general has charged that Motzer Dodge-Jeep-Eagle allegedly deceived new- and used-car buyers by adding delivery and handling charges to sales contracts.

Motzer is alleged to have charged buyers a $95 fee, claiming the fee covered the cost of inspecting and preparing new cars for delivery and overhead expenses.

"This fee seems erroneous because preparation costs for new cars are reimbursed to the dealer by the manufacturer, and preparation services are not performed on used cars," said a spokesman for the attorney general's office.

The suit seeks refunds plus interest for customers overcharged by Motzer during the past two years. The dealership also could be liable for up to $100,000 in civil penalties for violations of state law.

A spokesman for the dealership declined to comment.

IMPORT SALES BY MODEL

	Nov. 1988	Nov. 1987	11 Mos., 1988	11 Mos., 1987
ACURA	10,075	8,740	118,408	99,031
Integra	3,928	3,496	53,664	50,160
Legend	6,147	5,244	64,744	48,871
ALFA ROMEO	232	372	4,117	5,888
Milano	126	227	2,076	2,661
Spider	106	145	2,041	3,227
AUDI	1,355	2,305	21,637	39,486
4000S	6	96	216	8,985
4000CS Quattro	1	99	77	2,891
5000S	59	620	5,279	18,139
5000CS Turbo	10	179	895	3,473
5000CS Turbo Quattro	8	594	1,010	3,413
80	286	236	5,383	294
90	356	339	5,709	402
100/200	452	0	2,063	0
100/200 Quattro	175	0	733	0
Coupe GT	2	140	272	1,889
BMW	6,642	6,291	66,190	81,095
3 Series	2,800	3,808	33,291	53,362
5 Series	2,288	1,213	16,364	15,026
635CSi	132	158	1,744	1,895
7-Series	1,176	861	12,189	8,966
M3	112	173	1,565	918
M5	75	50	479	370
M6	59	28	558	558
CHEVROLET	6,107	11,631	107,423	125,595
Spectrum	2,733	6,105	63,092	71,314
Sprint	3,374	5,526	44,331	54,281
CHRYSLER MOTORS	9,481	9,684	119,524	125,435
Colt	5,261	5,137	74,966	74,275
Conquest	518	616	9,381	10,991
Medallion	1,214	1,391	13,945	12,144
Summit	1,099	0	3,078	0
Vista	1,389	1,505	18,154	28,025
DAIHATSU	1,054	0	10,637	0
FORD Festiva	5,164	3,224	63,429	23,038
HONDA	20,221	27,341	232,114	271,722
Civic/CRX	5,173	11,947	90,029	117,240
Accord	10,916	9,646	94,973	92,823
Prelude	4,132	5,748	47,112	61,659
HYUNDAI	17,732	18,074	242,930	244,265
ISUZU	1,598	2,722	22,998	35,797
I-Mark	1,360	2,044	16,015	29,061
Impulse	239	678	6,983	6,736
JAGUAR	1,925	1,761	18,687	20,071
XJ6	1,599	1,439	14,315	15,186
XJS	326	322	4,372	4,885
MASERATI	25	73	716	842
MAZDA	16,123	18,572	207,051	187,705
323	5,848	6,551	84,212	69,251
626	4,573	4,849	61,871	69,395
MX-6	273	2,392	7,800	8,475
929	1,784	2,227	24,257	4,681
RX-7	1,643	2,553	25,798	35,903
MPV	2,002	0	3,113	0
MERCEDES BENZ	6,504	6,748	77,080	82,156
190	1,049	1,077	15,579	16,271
260E	371	523	5,943	5,604
300	1,686	1,689	19,635	21,424
300 SE	683	0	4,597	0
300SDL Turbo	0	36	90	5,918
300SEL	280	304	4,497	327
420SEL	686	1,156	7,822	13,807
560SEL	599	9	5,193	5,648
560SL	851	1,004	11,016	10,686
560SEC	172	162	1,486	1,583
Tourist	127	23	1,222	888
MERKUR	779	845	14,479	13,685
XR4Ti	498	556	5,412	8,723
Scorpio	281	289	9,067	4,942
MITSUBISHI	4,492	4,683	64,492	62,769
Starion	96	244	2,862	4,827
Cordia	160	421	5,509	3,993
Tredia	5	226	475	4,792
Mirage	734	1,102	11,275	13,592
Galant	1,599	797	18,877	10,093
Precis	1,578	1,390	19,416	19,204
Van/Wagon	320	503	6,078	6,268
NISSAN	33,744	31,329	329,562	379,812
Sentra	11,318	11,123	126,578	105,923
Pulsar	3,023	3,385	43,106	58,773
Stanza	3,820	5,100	44,328	62,384
Maxima	9,030	6,509	65,679	87,312
200SX	5,531	1,384	27,283	28,851
300ZX	1,022	2,128	18,362	31,534
Hawaii	0	1,700	4,226	5,035
PEUGEOT	544	873	6,212	8,468
PONTIAC LeMans	5,442	2,664	57,536	32,654
PORSCHE	1,016	1,557	14,510	22,350
924S	85	118	2,193	2,870
944	228	389	3,385	6,017
944S	35	48	457	1,837
944 Turbo	127	211	1,667	2,483
911 Coupe	184	319	2,810	3,852
911 Turbo	109	128	1,027	1,436
911 Cabriolet	134	153	1,690	2,042
928S	114	191	1,281	1,811
SAAB	3,088	2,965	35,790	42,002
900	508	640	6,140	9,202
900S	667	798	9,378	13,499
900 Turbo	740	681	8,678	8,372
9000S	314	303	3,345	3,441
9000 Turbo	856	528	7,538	6,768
Tourist	3	15	711	718
STERLING	425	1,045	8,517	13,260
SUBARU	11,583	13,443	143,197	160,540
Hatchback	330	836	5,001	7,568
3-Door	589	1,236	8,469	13,382
4-Door Sedan	2,658	2,143	30,631	36,833
XT	860	978	13,268	16,741
Station Wagon	4,519	6,601	61,032	74,778
Justy	2,627	1,649	24,796	11,238
SUZUKI Swift	228	0	244	0
TOYOTA	53,897	51,524	559,522	511,130
Corolla	14,618	13,811	143,615	100,640
Tercel	10,667	8,928	92,788	89,448
Celica	5,362	5,199	61,396	72,177
Supra	1,597	1,916	18,165	27,288
Camry	17,318	16,534	194,008	163,186
Cressida	1,833	1,243	11,995	20,024
Land Cruiser	293	605	5,577	4,198
Van	400	594	4,925	11,974
4Runner SR 5	1,427	630	19,387	2,177
MR2	382	869	7,666	14,632
Hawaii	0	925	0	5,386
*VOLKSWAGEN	9,109	9,229	133,746	118,979
Cabriolet	423	504	12,222	13,018
Jetta	3,092	3,289	47,528	47,689
Golf/GTI	1,600	0	9,317	0
Vanagon	390	564	4,992	9,938
Quantum	191	234	2,829	8,418
Scirocco	249	253	3,490	6,645
Fox	3,164	4,385	53,368	35,271
VOLVO	8,134	6,493	92,893	102,529
240 Series	3,532	2,486	39,411	47,490
740 Series	3,913	2,513	40,013	39,632
760 Series	584	1,376	11,203	13,549
780	80	72	1,630	466
Tourist	25	46	636	1,386
YUGO	2,002	3,204	30,014	45,972
IMPORT TOTAL	238,722	246,085	2,803,655	2,856,256

*Volkswagen has reported sales of U.S.-built Golf and GTI models as imports after June 30, 1988.

Compiled by Karen Dabrowski

INVENTORIES

DOMESTIC DAYS' SUPPLIES

	Dec. 1 1988	Nov. 1 1988	Dec. 1 1987
Aries	—	—	73
Eagle	—	—	66
Prelude	129	111	—
Total Eagle	129	111	77
Horizon	103	79	58
Rendezvous	61	58	71
Talon	—	—	58
Reliant	92	87	64
Acclaim	32	—	—
Caravelle	100	89	—
Gran Fury	46	43	74
Total Plymouth	68	66	74
Lebaron	61	61	102
Lebaron GTS	73	75	103
LeBaron Salon	142	98	172
Fifth Avenue	105	109	102
New Yorker	78	67	73
New Yorker S	103	97	103
Total Chrysler	82	78	111
Aries	77	69	48
Reliant	66	62	48
Daytona	—	—	125
Caravelle	92	77	138
Reliant	44	38	68
Lancer	211	110	211
Omni	79	—	—
Diplomat	75	88	116
Dynasty	49	50	49
Dodge 600	94	66	65
Total Dodge	87	57	88
CHRYSLER MTRS.	72	69	98
Escort	83	71	73
Mustang	75	71	64
Tempo	84	80	89
Taurus	85	85	77
Thunderbird	138	89	—
Probe	85	45	—
Crown Victoria	75	88	63
Total Ford Div.	77	69	68
Lynx/Tracer	139	121	77
Capri	69	58	58
Cougar	81	78	73
Sable	138	88	64
Grand Marquis	80	68	64
Total Mercury	84	69	67
Continental	55	61	58
Lincoln	82	68	64
Mark VII	102	94	69
Total Lincoln	78	82	64
Total L-M Dealers	76	81	67
FORD MOTOR CO.	77	69	68
Skyhawk	144	88	—
Skyhawk/Skyrock	114	98	177
Century	78	72	103
Regal	116	126	82
LeSabre	77	73	128
Electra	152	140	—
Riviera	82	74	119
Riviera	88	99	116
Total Buick	92	86	113
Cimarron	48	68	110
Allante	194	188	139
Seville	82	67	54
DeVille	43	43	57
Fleetwood	80	71	48
Eldorado	77	84	51
Total Cadillac	51	55	74
Chevette	—	—	112
Geo Prizm/Nova	172	109	224
Cavalier	76	64	79
Camaro	76	100	103
Celebrity	87	78	116
Corsica/Beretta	114	105	170
Monte Carlo	91	80	109
Cutlass	76	74	64
Corvette	104	80	98
Total Chevrolet	85	84	121
Firenza	110	89	13
Calais	96	103	114
Cutlass Cr/Sc	39	49	78
Cutlass Supreme	82	87	107
Olds 88	78	72	98
Olds 98	61	62	89
Toronado	110	76	84
Total Oldsmobile	76	72	95
Fiero	129	72	144
Pontiac 1000	—	—	76
Sunbird	82	39	68
Firebird	115	89	95
Grand Am	82	89	88
Pontiac 6000	89	74	66
Grand Prix	111	94	89
Bonneville/I	97	83	89
Parisienne/Safari	103	87	83
Total Pontiac	86	67	74
GENERAL MTRS.	81	78	101
HONDA	16	16	13
MAZDA	56	48	47
NISSAN	69	73	24
TOYOTA	13	17	49
VOLKSWAGEN	—	—	117
DOM. TOTAL	73	69	80
Subcompact	82	48	82
Compact	81	49	67
Intermediate	82	78	98
Standard	79	63	5
Specialty	134	96	122

Car inventories rise; 71-day supply tallied

By Philly Murtha
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Stocks of new U.S.-built cars and imported cars crept up in November in spite of improved sales and introduction of bolder incentives by the Big 3.

Inventories, however, were about average for the beginning of December. Some dealers told Automotive News that their stockpiles were just right considering the Big 3 plant closings in December for the holidays.

Import-car stocks, however, were the highest for any Dec. 1 since Automotive News began compiling such figures.

Lagging November sales were responsible for bulging import stocks. Makes with stocks representing 100-200 days' supplies included all the Big 3 captives, Isuzu, Suzuki, Audi, Volskwagen, Alfa Romeo, Sterling, and Yugo.

On Dec. 1, combined import and U.S.-built car stocks were 2,238,-205, equal to a 71-day supply. That was 7.08 percent higher than on Nov. 1, when there were 2,090,681 cars, representing a 65-day supply.

However, combined car stocks were shaved 1.36 percent below last Dec. 1, when there were 2,269,-629 unsold domestic and import cars, equal to a 74-day supply.

This year, domestic carmakers' share of the combined car stockpile on Dec. 1 was reduced by 2.32 percentage points. Domestic cars represented 71.99 percent, and the import share was 28.01 percent.

December opened with 627,074 imported cars in stock, equal to a 66-day supply, compared with 603,043 unsold imported cars on Nov. 1, for a 65-day supply. A year ago, there were 583,128 imported cars, representing a 57-day supply.

The Dec. 1 stockpile of U.S.-built cars totaled 1,611,631 units, a 73-day supply. That was 8.33 percent higher than last month's 1,-487,638, a 66-day supply.

Domestic-car stocks were 4.44 percent below a year ago on Dec. 1 when there were 1,686,501 cars, representing a much fatter 83-day day supply because of slower November deliveries.

The average Dec. 1 days' supply of U.S.-built cars for 1983-1987 was 69 days. The Big 3's average days' supply of domestic cars on Dec. 1 for those five years was 72. For imports, the average was 37.

Many dealers queried by Automotive News said they were "very comfortable" with their inventories. A Connecticut Ford dealer said he had a six-week supply of cars, and a New Jersey multi-store owner said he had about 65 days' worth of all his cars.

Dealers claim that incentives have been necessary because the customer has come to count on enticements. "Everytime they knock a program off, we get a lull," said Peter Griffin, owner of Griffin Ford and Griffin Putnam Buick in Greenwich, Conn.

Six of the seven U.S. carmakers reported heftier inventories than on Nov. 1.

GM's domestic stocks were equal to an 81-day day supply on Dec. 1, up slightly from 76 days on Nov. 1.

However, GM reduced its domestic stockpile significantly from last year's total which was equal to a worrisome 101-day supply of cars. November sales gains and a new round of inducements helped curtail GM's inventory numbers.

Ford's domestic stocks were 11.40 percent above last month's levels. Ford began December with a 77-day supply, up from a 62-day supply a month ago.

Several Ford dealers and Ray L. Windecker, Ford's director of research and analysis, were quite content with the Dec. 1 numbers. "We'd be happier with 75 days' worth of domestic cars, but it's not a point of concern until it reaches 80 days — 100 scares you," Windecker said.

Chrysler Motors' U.S.-built car stocks rose nearly 10 percent from Nov. 1, and it began December with a 72-day supply vs. 63 days' worth on Nov. 1.

Among the transplants, Toyota reported a slim 13-day supply, although its car stocks were nearly 40 percent higher than it month-earlier total of 17 days.

Honda began the month with a lean 15-day supply, even though its transplant stocks were slightly higher than on Nov. 1, when it had 16 days' worth of U.S.-built cars.

Mazda's supply of U.S.-built cars were slightly higher on Dec. 1. It had the equivalent of 58-days' worth of cars compared with a 46-day supply a month earlier.

Although Nissan's U.S.-built car inventories continued to climb, the Japanese carmaker began December with a 66-day supply of cars vs. 73 days' worth on Nov. 1. Nissan's sales strengthened in November.

The import car and truck stockpile on Dec. 1 grew to 783,528, a 67-day supply, up from 746,664, a 66-day supply a month ago. The import vehicle stockpile was up slightly from 778,720 a year ago.

Import-truck stocks rose to 156,-454, equal to a 74-day supply up from 143,621 on Nov. 1, a 70-day supply.

IMPORT DAYS' SUPPLIES

	Dec. 1 1988	Nov. 1 1988	Dec. 1 1987
Chevrolet	166	165	131
Chrysler/Mitsubishi	131	148	78
Acura	49	34	28
Cadillac	87	75	—
Honda	16	16	13
Isuzu	174	166	119
Mazda	34	39	63
Mitsubishi	86	123	94
Nissan	72	128	93
Subaru	69	61	86
Toyota	20	13	28
JAPAN	55	67	53
Audi	153	115	115
BMW	73	66	59
Mercedes-Benz	45	38	50
Sterling	170	88	88
Porsche	86	89	102
VW	139	97	89
GERMANY	88	77	76
Alfa Romeo	144	106	82
Fiat/Yugo	139	144	112
Hyundai	78	67	26
Jaguar	34	30	28
Peugeot	80	66	73
Renault	82	83	86
Eagle/Renault	210	224	105
Saab	60	66	71
Sterling	105	82	82
Volvo	61	53	86
Yugo	133	140	69
Other Countries	86	88	89
Total Import Cars	89	83	67
Isuzu	111	109	104
Suzuki	88	72	69
Mitsubishi	67	88	91
Nissan	59	66	107
Range Rover	34	28	42
Suzuki	237	228	48
Toyota	30	24	44
Chrysler	140	135	121
Total Imp. Trucks	74	70	78
Total Imp. Vehicles	67	66	61

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PERSONNEL

FROM PAGE 29

George S. Bak, vice president, group supervisor on the Buick account. He joins the firm from Young & Rubicam where he was vice president, management supervisor on the Goodyear account.

Robert F. Lyons, vice president, associate creative director, assigned to the Buick and GMC Truck accounts. He joins the firm from Young & Rubicam, where he was vice president, creative director.

Dan A. Nearhood, senior art director. He joins the firm from Ross Roy, where he held the same position. He will work on Buick, GMC Truck and other accounts.

Gil Franceschi, senior art director, assigned to the Buick and GMC Truck accounts. He formerly had his own consulting firm, Ads Infinitum.

Susan L. Salatka, keyliner, assigned to the firm's McGraphic unit.

Dennis Romanoski, traffic coordinator, assigned to the GMC Truck and Champion Spark Plug accounts.

Morton Thiokol

George D. Lutz has been named vice president, industrial coatings, for Morton Thiokol Inc.

In his new post, Lutz will add the responsibility for the powder coatings group to his present position as president of Bee Chemical Co.

Plastigage/Gordon

Mira Miller has been appointed marketing manager for Plastigage/Gordon Plastics, and **Larry McLeskey** has been named division manager.

Miller has been with the company 10 years and most recently was sales coordinator.

McLeskey formerly was corporate quality assurance manager.

Rockwell International

Richard C. Quaid has been named vice president of South American operations for the on-highway products organization of Rockwell International's automotive operations.

He joined Rockwell in 19[illegible] most recently was general managing director of Brasaixos S.A., Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Sherwin-Williams

George A. Higgins has been named director of sales and marketing for the automotive group of Sherwin-Williams Co.'s Chemical Coatings Division.

He formerly was vice president of sales for Seibert Oxidermo.

Pannier Corp.

Pannier Corp. has announced a reorganization plan and has named three executive vice presidents. They are:

Allan D. Schilling, sales and marketing. He formerly was vice president of sales for the Pittsburgh division.

John E. Visconti, manufacturing. He formerly was vice president of manufacturing of the Pittsburgh division.

David E. Gibbs Jr., finance and chief financial officer. He formerly was controller and vice president of finance.

SKF Bearing Industries

George Maddox has been named manager, applications engineering for the automotive business unit of SKF Bearing Industries, Detroit.

He has been with the company 31 years and most recently held the same position at SKF, United Kingdom.

Toyoda Machinery

Albert F. Kinzer has been named vice president — automotive sales for Toyoda Machinery U.S.A. Inc., Arlington Heights, Ill.

Kinzer joins the company from ITT Automotive where he was director of sales and marketing for Thomson Division's wheel, body trim and structural components.

Traffic Safety Now

Traffic Safety Now has re-elected **Helen O. Petrauskas** chairperson. She is vice president of environmental and safety engineering for Ford Motor Co.

Charles L. Spilman has been re-elected to the full-time position of president.

James D. Johnston has been renamed treasurer. He is vice president of industry and government relations at General Motors.

Marvin W. Stucky has been named secretary. He is executive director of regional affairs for Chrysler Motors.

TRW

James C. Leslie has been appointed vice president — engineering for the TRW transportation electronics division, and **Melvin J. Rachal** has been named vice president — operations for the TRW valve division.

Leslie joins the company from Chrysler Corp., where he was manager, wiring systems, engineering office.

Rachal formerly was director of manufacturing services for the valve division.

In TRW's st[illegible]d suspension division, **Ann R. O'Neill** has been named general superintendent for the plant in Sterling Heights, Mich., and **Mark G. Angolia** has been named quality manager for that facility.

O'Neill joined the company in 1981 and most recently was a plant quality manager. She replaces **James Handysides**, who is now plant manager at the division's Greenville, N.C., plant.

Angolia joined the company in 1983 and most recently was quality engineering manager for the steering and suspension division.

Varta Batteries

Varta Batteries has announced several appointments. They are:

Craig E. Spafford, vice president — automotive sales. He joins the company from Midas Canada Inc., where he was director of wholesale operations.

Rod Wilkes, national sales manager. He formerly was Eastern Canada sales manager.

Bob Huta, sales manager — original equipment. He formerly was sales supervisor original-equipment/export.

Tom McGinn, national accounts manager. He formerly was sales supervisor national accounts.

VG Systems

Jack Dolpit has been named vice president of sales for VG Systems Inc.

He joins the company from General Parametrics Corp., where he was director of sales.

Other suppliers

Roger G. Andrzejewski has been appointed director of human resources and **Jim Miller** has been named director of corporate communications for Lacks Industries, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Ann Berry has been appointed manager of marketing communications for Samsung Semiconductor Inc.

Louise Corsini-Green has been appointed research planner at Beurmann-Marshall Corp., Southfield, Mich.

James B. Davis has been appointed chief financial officer of Ransburg Corp., Indianapolis.

Gary Dickinson, vice president and group executive in charge of the technical staffs group at General Motors, and **Gino J. Giocondi**, vice president for quality and productivity at Chrysler Motors, have been named to the Metropolitan Center for High Technology in Detroit.

Chuck Eckert has joined Carico Systems, Fort Wayne, Ind., as sales engineer. He will be responsible for the firm's automotive accounts in Indiana and Michigan.

John G. Freihaut, vice president of sales operations at Siemens Energy & Automation Inc., Atlanta, plans to retire Jan. 1, 1989, after 32 years with the company. He will continue as a consultant.

Allen R. Frydenlund has joined Charles River Associates, Boston, as a senior associate in the technology assessment program.

Daniel G. Hackett has been named account manager, Western region, for Nuturn Corp.'s automotive products division, Smithville, Tenn. **Stephen K. Hammil** has been named automotive products division controller.

Jorgen Hedenhag has been named general sales manager for Tymac Controls Corp. He formerly was national sales manager for Aquanetics Inc.

Peter M. Holleran has been named chief chemist in the materials development laboratory of Kingston-Warren Corp., Newfields, N.H.

John Paul Hoyer has been named corporate controller for Morgan Drive Away Inc.

James G. Hutzel has been named manager — materials at Polymer Corp., Reading, Pa.

Joan Jackson, senior public relations account manager at Keller-Crescent Co., has been elected to the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association's board of governors.

Jerry Jaques has been named manager of marketing support for Sheffield Measurement, Dayton, Ohio, and **Jack Quinlan** has been named Sheffield's sales manager for North America.

Mark McAleer has been named assistant sales manager for Sparkomatic Corp.'s Southern region.

Peter Raider has been appointed floorplan manager–of Lease Mart, Trumbull, Conn., a Bank Mart subsidiary.

Andrew Salvatore has been named manager of production and inventory planning for Fedco Automotive Components Co., Buffalo, N.Y.

Earl I. Seekins has been named vice president and general manager of the Flow Services Division of Flow Systems. The company makes ultrahigh-pressure waterjets and abrasivejets applications for industrial cutting and milling.

K. Grahame Walker, president and chief operating officer of Dexter Corp., has been elected a director of Barnes Group Inc., Bristol, Conn. Barnes Group is the parent of Associated Spring.

AUCTION DATES

Chrysler Motors

Dec. 20 — Florida Auto Auction of Orlando, Ocoee, Fla.; American Auto Auction, Walpole, Mass.; Denver Auto Auction, Aurora, Colo.; Nashville Auto Auction, Nashville, Tenn.; South Seattle Auto Auction, Kent, Wash.; Ark-La-Tex Auto Auction, Shreveport, La.; Hatfield Auto Auction, Hatfield, Pa.; and Golden Gate Auto Auction, Fremont, Calif.

Dec. 21 — Northway Exchange, Clifton Park, N.Y.; Minneapolis Auto Auction, Plymouth, Minn.; and Butler Auto Auction, Gibsonia, Pa.

Dec. 22 — Clanton's Auto Auction, Darlington, S.C.; Big Sky Auto Auction Inc., Billings, Mont.; Aptco Auto Auction, Taylor, Mich.; Salt Lake Auto Auction, Salt Lake City; and Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Mo.

Used Car Sales
Auction Averages

December 88	$5,381
Month ago	$5,810
Year ago	$5,914

Ford Motor Co.

Dec. 20 — Harrisonburg Auto Auction, Harrisonburg, Va., and Golden Gate Auto Auction, Fremont, Calif.

Dec. 21 — Albuquerque Auto Auction, Albuquerque, N.M.; Concord Auto Auction, Acton, Mass.; Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Mo.; Lakeland Auto Auction, Lakeland, Fla.; Newburgh Auto Auction Inc., Newburgh, N.Y.; and Salt Lake Auto Auction, Salt Lake City

Dec. 22 — Wednesday Auto Auction, Obetz, Ohio; Skyline Auto Exchange, Fairfield, N.J.; and St. Louis Auto Auction, St. Louis

Model Breakdown
Auction Averages

	DEC 1988	NOV 1988	OCT 1988
1988 ...	$9,723	$9,514	$9,863
1987 ...	$7,300	$7,330	$7,759
1986 ...	$5,365	$5,997	$6,495
1985 ...	$4,564	$5,077	$5,698
1984 ...	$3,769	$3,721	$4,206
1983 ...	$2,782	$2,948	$3,258
1982 ...	$2,189	$2,228	$2,633
1981 ...	$1,585	$1,706	$1,882
Overall Average	$5,381	$5,204	$5,748

General Motors

Dec. 20 — Southern Auto Auction, East Windsor, Conn.; Dallas Auto Auction, Grand Prairie, Texas; and Harrisonburg Auto Auction, Harrisonburg, Va.

Dec. 21 — Atlanta Auto Auction, Atlanta; Baltimore-Washington Auto Exchange, Baltimore; Clanton's Auto Auction, Darlington, S.C.; Southern California Auto Auction, Fontana; Puget Auto Auction, Auburn, Wash.; and Omaha Auto Auction, Omaha, Neb.

Dec. 22 — Butler Auto Auction, Gibsonia, Pa.; Aptco Auto Auction, Taylor, Mich.; Nashville Auto Auction, Nashville; and Denver Auto Auction, Englewood, Colo.

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Early-December sales drop 10%

By Philly Murtha
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Early-December domestic-car deliveries dropped 10.52 percent from the corresponding period of 1987.

Suggesting that the lower 10-day numbers might be misleading, auto analyst Michael Luckey of Michael Luckey Consulting Group Inc., Creskill, N.J., said, "Companies started to adopt major incentives at this time last year. Today's incentives are still pretty modest. The annual selling rate of 7.1 million is consistent with what we have seen since Oct. 1. Pricing was pretty steep on '88 models. The level of incentives will continue to grow."

This year, 167,438 U.S.-built cars were sold during the period, down from 187,126 in early December last year.

The latest period also was off 10.33 percent from last month's first 10 days, when 186,521 U.S.-built cars were sold.

The surge in last month's first-period sales was mainly due to a new batch of incentives.

In spite of early-December's downturn, calendar year-to-date sales of U.S.-built cars were 9,881,997, up 3.22 percent from 9,573,968 sold through Dec. 10 last year.

In early December, the daily selling rate was 18,604, 10.52 percent lower than last year's 20,792 rate. Both periods had nine selling days.

Only Honda, Nissan and Mazda reported gains over the year-ago 10-day period in sales of U.S.-made cars.

General Motors sold 10.29 percent fewer domestic cars in the first 10 days, with each of its car divisions reporting downturns.

Ford Motor Co. delivered 11.62 percent fewer cars than in the year-earlier period.

Although Chrysler Motors sold 10.29 percent fewer U.S.-built cars in the period, Dodge reported a 20.98 percent increase over early-December 1987.

Honda's transplant sales climbed 33.74 percent from last year and Nissan delivered 28.50 percent more U.S.-built cars in the period, while Toyota's transplant car sales fell 41.68 percent below last year's.

Mazda reported a threefold gain in sales of cars built at its Flat Rock, Mich., plant.

U.S. light-truck sales totaled 99,353 in early December, down 11.40 percent from 112,136 last year.

DOMESTIC SALES

	Dec. 1-10, 1988	Dec. 1-10, 1987
Eagle	933	453
Chrysler	5,764	9,103
Plymouth	5,751	7,663
Dodge	11,608	9,595
Chrysler Motors	24,056	26,814
Ford	34,934	40,401
Mercury	11,122	11,917
Lincoln	4,161	4,523
Ford Motor Co.	50,237	56,841
Buick	11,782	14,629
Cadillac	5,953	8,060
Chevrolet	33,290	37,958
Oldsmobile	14,084	15,557
Pontiac	15,043	15,832
General Motors	80,152	92,036
Volkswagen	—	873
Honda	9,358	6,997
Nissan	1,966	1,530
Toyota	1,086	1,862
Mazda	583	173
U.S. Ind. Total	167,438	187,126

Nissan was the only U.S. truck maker to report an increase: 24.13 percent more than in the year-earlier period.

Ford's light-truck sales slid 21.65 percent. Chrysler sold 6.79 percent fewer light trucks, and GM reported a 5.21-percent drop.

Combined sales of U.S.-built cars and light trucks for the first 10 days were 266,791, down 10.85 percent from last year's 299,262.

In the first 10 days, the Big 3's combined domestic-car and light-truck totals declined 8 to 16 percent. Nissan was the only U.S. vehicle maker to report an overall increase; its combined sales rose 25.99 percent.

CAFE

FROM PAGE 3

standards. Both companies have said they would like the level rolled back to 26.0.

NHTSA has denied both requests on grounds it does not have statutory authority to do so. Both companies have challenged that position in an enforcement case brought by NHTSA against Mercedes before a Transportation Department administrative law judge.

Daniel Head, the judge hearing the case at the Transportation Department, will not only decide on the authority question, but also whether Mercedes must pay $5.5 million in civil penalties for failing to meet the 1985 standard.

NHTSA wants Head to allow it to collect the fine since the 1985 CAFE standard was and is expected to be 27.5 mpg. The agency says its denial of the Mercedes and GM petitions was within its discretion and "administratively final."

It also maintains that changing any CAFE standard retroactively would be an "abuse of its discretion" and make NHTSA itself subject to court action. Moreover, retroactively changing a CAFE standard is not consistent with earning and applying credits both forward and backward.

Mercedes has taken the position that the administrative enforcement procedure should be stayed because NHTSA might still amend the CAFE standards if ordered to do so by the court of appeals. And any change resulting from CAFE adjustment litigation would also change the company's liability for civil penalties, Mercedes said.

According to Mercedes, only if the Court of Appeals agrees with NHTSA that it cannot retroactively roll back standards will the law judge need to consider the legal issues raised by it.

GM, also differing with NHTSA over its interpretation of the law, says the CAFE law does not explicitly ban the agency from retroactively changing the standard, adding that if Congress had intended to prevent NHTSA from doing so, it would have said so in the law.

GM cites a 1975 House report that says the mechanism for reviewing the standard prior to enforcement was "not intended to exclude review."

GM feels that was the law's intent "since Congress recognized that CAFE standards set long in advance of their effective date might eventually prove unattainable."

OBITUARIES

Edward L. Williams

ROYAL OAK, Mich. — Edward L. Williams, 62, retired director of community relations at Chrysler Corp., died Dec. 8. He was with Chrysler from 1955 to 1981.

R.O. Evans

DALLAS — R.O. Evans, 71, owner of R.O. Evans Pontiac-GMC Truck, died Nov. 30. He opened his dealership in 1961 after 12 years as a Buick dealer in Kauffman, Texas.

Wade Sherrard

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Wade Sherrard, 83, retired managing director of the California Trucking Association, died Nov. 20.

Wallace J. Brinkmann

ST. LOUIS — Wallace J. Brinkmann, 60, president of King Dodge and president of the St. Louis Automotive Association, died Nov. 16.

Harriet R. Abramson

NEWTON, Mass. — Harriet R. Abramson, 57, co-founder of Silver Lake Dodge, died Sept. 13. Her husband, Herbert R., continues to operate the dealership, which they opened in 1960.

PRODUCTION

Trucks top four million for 1st time

By Kathy Boyer
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

U.S. truckmakers built their four-millionth vehicle of the year last Wednesday, marking the first time annual truck output has reached that figure.

The previous record was 3,880,342 in 1987.

Year-to-date, 4,044,537 units have been assembled, 7.65 percent more than the 3,757,241 completed last year at this time.

Truck output was slated at 93,779 units last week, 3.05 percent below the previous week's 96,725 but 12.41 percent more than the year-ago week's 83,429.

Last week's targeted auto production of 167,998 was slightly above (0.31 percent) the prior week's 167,477 and 29.81 percent more than the year-ago week's 129,420.

The year-ago week's output was affected by downtime at four plants for inventory adjustment and equipment changes.

So far this year, 6,937,597 cars have been assembled, slightly below (0.19 percent) the 6,950,630 completed last year at this point.

Companies split last week's scheduled car output as follows: General Motors, 47.96 percent; Ford Motor Co., 26.00 percent; Chrysler Motors, 16.13 percent; Honda of America Manufacturing Inc., 4.46 percent; Mazda Motor Manufacturing (U.S.A.) Corp., 2.88 percent; Nissan Motor Manufacturing Co. U.S.A., 1.36 percent; and New United Motor Manufacturing Inc., 1.21 percent.

GM scheduled overtime last Saturday at its Lordstown, Ohio, car plant and its Flint, Mich., and Pontiac, Mich., truck plants.

Overtime was slated last Saturday for the following Ford plants: Wixom, Mich.; Lorain, Ohio; Wayne, Mich.; Kansas City, Mo.; Norfolk, Va.; Louisville, Ky.; and St. Louis.

All car and truck plants will close Dec. 23 for the Christmas holiday. Plants are scheduled to resume operations Jan. 4.

Millionth car built in Canada

Canadian automakers built their one-millionth car of the year last Wednesday. Auto production did not reach one million last year. The last time it topped that figure was 1986, when the full-year total was 1,073,312.

So far this year, 1,009,850 cars have been built, 27.98 percent more than the 789,052 completed last year at this point.

Scheduled production of 17,883 cars last week was a few units above the previous week's 17,866 but 19.74 percent below the year-ago week's 22,280.

Truck output was estimated at 20,965 units last week, 1.73 percent below the previous 21,334 but 11.11 percent more than the year-ago week's 18,868.

Year-to-date, 914,394 trucks have been built, 13.37 percent more than the 806,553 completed last year at this time.

All car and truck plants will be closed from Dec. 23 until Jan. 4 for the Christmas holiday.

U.S. CAR	Week Ended Dec. 17, 1988	Week Ended Dec. 19, 1987	Week Ended Dec. 10, 1988	Dec. to Date	Jan. 1 to Dec. 17, 1988	Jan. 1 to Dec. 19, 1987
Alliance	0	0	0	0	0	15,994
Total Eagle	0	0	0	0	0	15,994
Horizon	1,500	1,119	1,620	3,980	77,979	44,344
Sundance	2,400	1,713	2,884	6,580	102,979	88,244
Reliant	2,400	4,021	2,537	6,017	90,778	131,815
Acclaim	1,000	0	978	2,360	6,232	0
Caravelle	0	1,085	0	0	9,265	41,676
Gran Fury	200	117	285	578	19,917	7,088
Total Plymouth	7,500	8,055	8,304	19,494	307,150	313,167
LeBaron K	0	1,063	0	0	7,912	63,090
LeBaron J	2,900	2,251	3,499	7,809	88,101	112,245
LeBaron GTS	200	444	309	622	9,315	36,774
N. Yorker E-Class	0	0	0	0	0	57,102
N. Yorker C-Class	2,800	989	2,880	6,615	104,257	18,053
Fifth Avenue	900	982	943	2,264	32,606	63,491
Total Chrysler	6,800	5,729	7,611	17,311	242,191	350,755
Omni	1,500	1,114	1,540	3,834	76,537	38,871
Daytona	1,900	1,529	2,357	5,201	77,623	62,485
Shadow	2,400	2,449	2,925	6,382	100,665	93,894
Aries	2,200	2,933	2,163	5,517	90,246	125,234
Dodge 600	0	600	0	0	8,549	39,436
Dynasty	3,000	1,123	3,540	7,760	110,894	7,396
Lancer	200	234	225	527	9,146	22,731
Spirit	1,300	0	1,329	3,090	6,353	0
Diplomat	300	292	309	839	18,733	14,753
Total Dodge	12,800	10,274	14,388	33,158	499,346	404,800
CHRYSLER MOTORS	27,100	24,058	30,303	69,963	1,048,687	1,084,716
Escort	9,344	9,496	9,610	22,668	405,065	385,351
Mustang	4,528	4,635	4,556	10,773	195,830	209,490
Tempo	3,915	3,616	3,885	9,348	179,166	142,672
Taurus	8,812	8,101	8,935	21,233	386,467	398,974
Thunderbird	3,618	2,878	2,939	7,773	109,197	154,066
Total Ford Div.	30,217	28,726	29,925	71,795	1,275,745	1,290,553
Lynx	0	0	0	0	0	21,352
Topaz	1,590	1,130	1,615	3,857	69,078	45,959
Cougar	3,403	2,892	1,966	6,184	85,398	135,624
Sable	3,049	2,388	3,042	7,355	132,416	119,916
Total Mercury	8,042	6,410	6,623	17,396	286,892	323,086
Continental	1,804	707	1,567	4,098	53,768	13,093
Mark VII	904	651	783	2,051	27,956	27,881
Lincoln	2,710	3,399	2,350	6,150	120,777	138,702
Total Lincoln	5,418	4,757	4,700	12,299	202,501	179,676
Total L-M Division	13,460	11,167	11,323	29,695	489,393	502,762
FORD MOTOR CO.	43,677	39,893	41,248	101,490	1,765,138	1,793,315
Skyhawk	1,160	825	1,198	2,837	28,457	33,670
Skylark/Somerset	1,647	0	1,612	3,993	53,517	62,909
Century	3,280	0	3,442	8,106	138,917	152,152
Regal (rwd)	0	0	0	0	0	40,235
Riviera	661	240	617	1,535	12,720	13,098
Electra	2,495	1,691	2,478	5,979	89,103	92,663
LeSabre (fwd)	2,901	2,380	2,866	6,951	131,570	139,673
LeSabre (rwd)	180	168	177	441	9,631	9,787
Reatta	272	0	264	640	9,517	0
Total Buick	12,616	5,284	12,674	30,482	473,432	544,187
Cimmaron	0	22	0	0	3,893	10,261
Eldorado	778	600	724	1,802	34,455	20,783
Seville	590	752	536	1,351	22,820	19,829
Brougham (rwd)	1,225	1,883	1,081	2,665	35,502	75,220
Deville (fwd)	4,520	3,345	4,722	11,319	159,763	139,136
Allante	75	110	75	180	2,164	4,510
Total Cadillac	7,188	6,712	7,138	17,317	258,427	269,759
Cavalier	7,531	7,249	7,407	17,835	347,300	302,278
Camaro	2,305	2,209	2,548	5,872	97,207	119,357
Celebrity	4,260	0	4,313	10,391	185,168	283,320
Corsica/Beretta	9,005	9,156	9,117	22,185	424,575	342,209
Monte Carlo	0	10	0	0	0	72,031
Caprice	3,815	5,915	3,565	8,859	200,141	195,459
Corvette	450	642	450	1,097	22,333	27,796
Total Chevrolet	27,366	25,181	27,400	66,238	1,276,724	1,342,450
Calais	3,153	0	3,241	7,803	116,249	113,679
Firenza	0	417	0	0	5,230	13,945
Cutlass Ciera	1,680	0	1,689	4,015	36,788	108,395
Cutlass Supreme	3,660	6	3,563	7,223	137,431	73,120
Toronado	331	428	316	772	14,926	15,962
88 (fwd)	3,359	3,433	3,340	8,037	153,493	174,883
88 (rwd)	285	359	234	589	10,850	14,753
Olds 98	2,247	1,754	2,012	4,962	73,632	70,988
Total Oldsmobile	14,715	6,397	14,375	33,200	548,599	589,323
Sunbird	3,291	2,230	3,478	7,739	110,149	86,802
Grand Am	4,980	4,847	6,058	13,442	237,713	243,026
Firebird	1,488	1,231	1,809	3,755	64,886	76,383
Grand Prix	3,503	0	0	3,503	136,046	0
Pontiac 6000	2,335	0	2,414	5,777	92,293	67,496
Bonneville	2,971	1,872	2,983	7,143	119,342	125,126
Safari/Parisienne	115	115	105	259	7,232	9,052
Fiero	0	1,046	0	0	13,297	32,874
Total Pontiac	18,683	11,341	16,647	41,618	780,958	640,761
GENERAL MOTORS	80,568	54,915	78,234	188,856	3,338,140	3,386,480
HONDA	7,500	6,715	7,551	17,986	358,306	318,587
Civic	2,400	2,044	2,515	5,900	107,595	87,731
Accord	5,100	4,671	5,036	12,086	250,711	230,856
MAZDA†	4,844	533	5,779	12,614	158,895	3,997
NISSAN	2,284	1,290	2,263	5,369	107,967	112,518
NUMMI	2,025	0	2,099	4,794	124,467	166,040
Corolla	1,825	0	1,804	4,228	53,028	43,065
Geo Prizm/Nova	200	0	295	567	71,436	142,975
VOLKSWAGEN	0	2,016	0	0	35,997	64,977
Golf/GTI	0	1,316	0	0	30,444	47,984
Jetta	0	700	0	0	5,553	16,993
Total Cars, U.S.	167,998	125,420	167,477	401,073	6,937,597	6,950,630
Total Cars, Canada	17,883	22,280	17,866	43,088	1,009,850	789,052
U.S., Canada Cars	185,881	151,700	185,343	444,161	7,947,447	7,739,682
U.S., Canada Cars and Trucks	300,736	275,255	301,124	1,175,028	12,603,087	12,045,658

Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.
†—Total includes the MX-6 and Ford Probe.

CANADIAN CAR	Week Ended Dec. 17, 1988	Week Ended Dec. 19, 1987	Week Ended Dec. 10, 1988	Dec. to Date	Jan. 1 to Dec. 17, 1988	Jan. 1 to Dec. 19, 1987
Eagle	0	—	0	0	0	—
Premier	1,275	—	1,279	3,070	59,093	—
CHRYSLER MOTORS	1,275	1,345	1,279	3,070	59,093	11,792
Escort	0	—	0	0	0	—
Lynx	0	—	0	0	0	—
Tempo	3,268	—	3,349	7,973	167,050	—
Topaz	1,628	—	1,784	4,104	68,085	—
Crown Victoria	2,895	—	2,930	7,019	126,952	—
Grand Marquis	2,865	—	2,931	6,948	128,589	—
FORD MOTOR CO.	10,656	11,103	10,994	26,044	490,656	425,042
Celebrity	212	—	196	548	19,947	—
Cutlass Ciera	4,060	—	3,711	9,384	216,219	—
Cutlass Supreme	0	—	0	0	0	—
Grand Prix	0	—	0	0	0	—
Pontiac 6000	0	—	0	0	29,690	—
Regal	0	—	0	0	139,613	—
GENERAL MOTORS	4,272	9,075	3,907	9,932	405,469	328,908
Civic	1,500	—	1,506	3,610	46,423	—
Accord	0	—	0	0	1,828	—
HONDA	1,500	498	1,506	3,610	48,251	15,321
VOLVO	180	259	180	432	6,381	7,969
Total Cars, Canada	17,883	22,280	17,866	43,088	1,009,850	789,052

U.S. TRUCK☆	Week Ended Dec. 17, 1988	Week Ended Dec. 19, 1987	Week Ended Dec. 10, 1988	Dec. to Date	Jan. 1 to Dec. 17, 1988	Jan. 1 to Dec. 19, 1987
Caravan	2,100	—	2,699	5,875	91,342	—
Dakota	2,300	—	2,881	6,325	106,702	—
Mini-Ram Van	100	—	203	378	11,676	—
Pickups	2,300	—	2,872	6,316	85,198	—
Total Dodge	6,800	7,670	8,655	18,895	294,918	310,442
Cherokee	3,600	—	4,527	10,160	182,518	—
Commanche	700	—	920	1,963	42,817	—
Grand Wagoneer	300	—	350	790	13,859	—
Pickups	0	—	0	0	0	—
Wagoneer	200	—	240	533	10,576	—
Total Jeep	5,000	4,892	6,037	13,446	249,770	218,318
Voyager	1,800	—	2,210	4,933	84,320	—
Total Plymouth	1,800	—	2,210	4,933	83,685	—
CHRYSLER MOTORS	13,600	12,362	16,902	37,273	625,462	528,760
Aerostar	5,807	—	4,955	12,722	203,760	—
Bronco	2,128	—	1,775	4,715	57,736	—
Bronco II	3,347	—	2,839	7,486	119,695	—
Econoline	5,006	—	5,586	12,843	237,145	—
Heavy trucks	1,358	—	1,397	3,247	63,416	—
Light trucks	12,940	—	11,691	29,746	486,013	—
Ranger	7,969	—	7,644	18,863	318,592	—
Total Ford Div.	38,575	32,079	35,887	89,642	1,486,357	1,449,248
FORD MOTOR CO.	38,575	32,079	35,887	89,642	1,486,357	1,449,248
Astro	3,465	—	3,296	8,169	171,157	—
Blazer	636	—	639	1,484	25,809	—
Mediums/Heavies	457	—	842	1,441	20,027	—
P-Model	948	—	990	2,307	39,633	—
Pickups	9,203	—	10,378	23,510	363,325	—
S-10	5,632	—	6,671	14,947	296,600	—
S-10 Blazer	4,029	—	3,862	9,678	168,156	—
Sportsvan/Van	0	—	0	0	86,204	—
Suburban	1,933	—	1,944	4,353	89,322	—
Total Chevrolet	26,303	25,080	28,842	65,889	1,240,233	1,108,586
Jimmy	180	—	178	423	7,536	—
Mediums/Heavies	1,565	—	617	2,388	35,186	—
P-Model	72	—	70	181	4,919	—
Pickups	2,517	—	3,136	6,879	111,550	—
S-15	1,153	—	1,396	3,265	67,965	—
S-15 Jimmy	1,071	—	1,073	2,537	47,098	—
Safari	921	—	856	2,187	43,907	—
Suburban	515	—	507	1,366	30,344	—
Vandura/Rally Vans	0	—	0	0	30,617	—
Total GMC	7,992	6,140	7,833	19,225	379,122	296,552
GENERAL MOTORS	34,295	31,220	36,475	85,114	1,619,355	1,475,138
NAVISTAR	1,855	1,790	2,034	4,637	84,231	73,841
NISSAN	2,704	3,228	2,677	6,439	93,282	97,994
AM GENERAL*	450	450	450	1,080	22,230	17,100
MISCELLANEOUS*	2,300	2,300	2,300	5,520	113,620	115,160
Total Trucks, U.S.	93,779	83,429	96,725	229,706	4,044,537	3,757,241

CANADIAN TRUCK	Week Ended Dec. 17, 1988	Week Ended Dec. 19, 1987	Week Ended Dec. 10, 1988	Dec. to Date	Jan. 1 to Dec. 17, 1988	Jan. 1 to Dec. 19, 1987
Caravan	3,414	—	3,403	8,187	140,406	—
Mini-Ram Van	204	—	212	499	11,701	—
Ram Wagon	620	—	659	1,533	26,313	—
Ram Van B	1,730	—	1,769	4,219	72,046	—
Total Dodge	5,968	8,110	6,043	14,438	250,466	379,480
Voyager	2,526	—	2,589	6,164	124,016	—
Total Plymouth	2,526	—	2,589	6,164	124,016	—
Wrangler	1,248	—	1,280	3,055	51,367	—
Total Jeep	1,248	880	1,280	3,055	51,367	35,516
CHRYSLER MOTORS	9,742	8,990	9,912	23,657	425,849	414,996
FORD MTR. (lt. trks.)	3,648	3,678	3,618	8,391	159,654	149,157
Light trucks	3,816	—	3,953	9,329	154,663	—
Vans	1,594	—	1,629	3,848	60,279	—
Total Chevrolet	5,410	—	5,582	13,177	214,942	—
Light trucks	1,344	—	1,491	3,302	73,992	—
Vans	551	—	459	1,241	28,941	—
Total GMC	1,895	—	1,950	4,543	102,933	—
GENERAL MOTORS	7,305	5,975	7,532	17,720	317,875	232,692
NAVISTAR	270	225	272	542	11,016	9,708
Total Trks., Canada	20,965	18,868	21,334	50,610	914,394	806,553
U.S., Canada Trks.	114,744	102,297	118,059	280,316	4,958,931	4,563,794

☆—Includes window van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.
Miscellaneous includes estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz, etc.
Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.